of Health and Family Welfare addressed letters to the Chief Ministers of all the States drawing their attention to these figures requesting them to take all necessary steps to improve the sex ratio in their respective States. All the States and Union territories have also been requested to take steps to effectively implement the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994 and to generate awareness about the provisions of the Act among doctors, law enforcing agencies as well as general public to eradicate the evil of female foeticide, so that sex ratjo could be improved.

Dr. C.P. Thakur, Minister for Health and Family Welfare has also addressed a letter to over two lakh doctors all over the country, requesting them to extend their help and co-operate in the eradication of the evil of female foeticide in order to also improve the adverse sex ratio in the country.

The States and UTs have confirmed that they are making concerted efforts to implement the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994 to improve the adverse sex ratio. Under the Act Appropriate Authorities and Advisory Committees have been constituted in all States and UTs at State/UT and district levels. These statutory bodies have also been set up at sub-district levels in most of the major States.

On the basis of detailed investigation undertaken by the Appropriate Authorities and press reports, 216 cases have been filed in the various Courts / with Police in various States/UTs. 107 ultrasound machines of unregistered clinics have also been seized and sealed by the Authorities for violation of the Act.

Anthrax cases in the country

3522. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the actual number of cases of Anthrax identified, so far, in the country. State-wise;

(b) the precautions/remedial measures taken by his Ministry to educate the general public in this regard; and

(c) whether his Ministry proposes to formulate any law against people who arc spreading rumours about bacteria/bio-germs causing unnecessary panic among people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) The actual number of Anthrax cases identified in the country, State-wise, is given under:—

		Karnataka	West Bengal
No. of cases	1999	8	—
	2000	—	43
	2001	4	—
No. of deaths	1999	5	—
	2000	—	3
	2001	2	—

(b) Government has taken the following action:—

1. To create awareness about the disease, an issue of "CD alert" covering all aspects of anthrax including the guidelines for the prevention and control was circulated by National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD), Delhi in July, 2000 to all the concerned health authorities in different States and Union Territories.
2. A national workshop was conducted at the National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Delhi in September, 2001 for developing surveillance mechanism for pathogens with biological warfare potential. In this workshop all the potential bio-terrorism pathogens were discussed including the anthrax.
3. An issue of "CD alert" on bio-terrorism with special reference to anthrax was circulated by NICD, Delhi in October, 2001 to health authorities of all States and UTs. The issue also covered the guidelines to be followed during biological war or terrorists attack and effective handling of any such of suspicious envelop / package by the public, police and postal departments.
4. Guidelines for packaging, transportation of clinical specimens and processing protocol in laboratory were circulated to all the Medical Colleges of the country.
5. A meeting on chemical and bio-terrorism was organized by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to take stock of the preparedness to face any situation including availability of anti-anthrax drugs.

6. National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Delhi provides investigative support of outbreak of anthrax in any part of the country, whenever asked/required to do so. NICD also provides testing facilities for anthrax suspected envelopes/packages.

(c) There are sufficient penal provisions in the existing law to deal with persons who are spreading rumours and creating public nuisance.

Deaths due to HIV/AIDS

3523. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated number of women and men in age group 12-25 infected with HI V / AIDS as on 1 st January, 2002;

(b) the number of deaths due to this disease during the past three years, year-wise; and

(c) the steps taken to minimize the casualities and the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) The date related to women and men in age group 12-25 infected with HIV/ AIDS is not being maintained by NACO.

(b) A statement indicating the number of deaths due to HIV/AIDS during the past three years is given below:—

Year	No. of Deaths
1999	229
2000	378
2001	765

(c) In order to prevent and control the spread of HIV / AIDS in India, Government of India has launched a Comprehensive Programme, currently under implementation throughout the country as a Centrally sponsored scheme with the following components:—

- Reducing the spread of HI V in groups at high risk by identification of target populations and providing peer counselling, condom promotion, and treatment of sexually transmitted infections.
- Preventive intervention for the general population by Information, Education and Communication (IEC) and awareness campaign,